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TAROT FUNDAMENTALS

Lesson No. 32

BUILDERS OF THE ADYTUM

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Lesson Thirty-two

TEMPERANCE

The wings of the Angel in Key 14 are fiery red with blue highlights, to indicate the fiery quality of the sign Sagittarius and its color attribution, which is blue. Remember that the symbol for Sagittarius is an arrow suggesting aim, will, purpose, intention. Also bear in mind that as the natural sign of the ninth house of the horoscope, Sagittarius has to do with dreams, visions, religion and philosophy. That is, with the systematic formulation of ideals and with the quest for knowledge that is implied by the word **verification**.

Hence Sagittarius has to do with long journeys ("the travels in strange countries" of Freemasonry). Sagittarius is connected with those high aspirations of the human heart which lead man away from this world of false appearances into the country. . . strange, alas, to many! . . . which is his true home.

The torch is a symbol of fire and from it fall five Yods upon an eagle. The Yods refer to the five differentiations of the Life-power into the five subtle principles of sensation. Thus they have the same meaning as the radiating lines in the oval shown in Key 13. Furthermore, since they are Yods, they indicate a connection with Key 9. The fire is identical with that subtle flame generated in the Virgo region of the human body.

Here the flame is directed toward the head of an eagle, symbol of the sign Scorpio, because the Great Work has to do with the modification of a specific phase of the Life-Breath concentrated in the nerve centers connected with Scorpio.

This is a hint of one of the most carefully protected secrets of alchemy. Its full meaning cannot and must not be put into plain words lest the unprepared misuse the knowledge. When you have verified in your own experience the teachings of Tarot, you will be able to develop this seed-thought fully and with your comprehension of the secret will come also full understanding of the necessity for keeping it a mystery undisclosed to the profane.

The vase represents what alchemists call the "vase of art". In Philalethes' FOUNT of CHEMICAL TRUTH, we read: "When we speak of our vessel and our fire, we mean by both expressions our water, nor is our furnace anything diverse or distinct from our water. There is, then, one vessel, one furnace, one fire, and all these make up one water. The fire digests, the vessel whitens and penetrates, the furnace is the bond which comprises and encloses all, and these three are our Mercury."

This cryptic language refers to **personal** consciousness which is threefold, viz., Spirit, the fire, Soul, the vessel, Body, the furnace. These three constitute "our" Mercury, or human self-consciousness and is represented by the vase. It is held in the angel's hand to show that the Great Work cannot succeed unless human personality is **taken in hand** by the Higher Self, or Holy Guardian Angel.

The water pouring from the vase is a reference to the letter Mem and to the doctrine symbolized by the Hanged Man (see Lessons 27 and 28). When the purified "water", or reversed personal consciousness is poured out on the lion, as in Key 14, the meaning is plain. Through suspension of the false notion of personal independence one comes to understand the true function of personality as an instrument for the Divine Will.

This change of mind is carried into subconsciousness as shown in Key 8, which represents, like the lion in Key 14, the zodiacal sign Leo. **A change of heart is brought about.** More, a definite activity is instituted at the heart center of the physical body.

Understand this just as it is written. Here are no blinds, no figures of speech. The change is that to which another alchemist, an anonymous German alludes, when he says: "Fire and flowing water are contrary to one another; happy thou, if thou canst unite them: let it suffice thee to know this!"

The rainbow symbolizes the differentiation of the vibratory activity of light into color by means of water suspended in the upper air. When the water of consciousness has been mingled with the cosmic Life-Breath, then is manifest the rainbow of promise. The colors of the rainbow are the colors of the planetary centers in the human body.

In the instructions for coloring given in the preceding lesson, no mention was made of indigo, the color of Saturn, because it is hard to show it clearly in painting the Keys. This deep blue-violet is between the violet at the top of the rainbow and the blue you were told to place beneath the violet.

Thus the rainbow represents the harmonious combination of the alchemical "metals", which are the same as the planetary centers, and the same also, as the **chakras** of the yogis. The rainbow refers also to the occult use of color as a most effective means to bring greater power into our human field of operation.

By means of color we can use vibratory activity to modify external conditions. This subject is given more intensive treatment in later instructions, wherein you will receive many practical secrets of the utilization of color in combination with sound.

Finally, the rainbow confirms the attribution of Key 14 to the letter Samekh and to the sign Sagittarius. For the name of this sign in Hebrew is קשת, **qesheth**, the Bow.

The path in Key 14 rises between twin mountain peaks which symbolize the Qabalistic Sephiroth, Chokmah and Binah, Wisdom and Understanding. It ends beneath a crown symbolizing Kether, the Crown of Primal Will. The path begins in Yesod, Foundation or Basis, designated also as the Sphere of the Moon.

In this connection, remember that all representations of water in Tarot begin with the robe of the High Priestess. Bear in mind what was said in SEVEN STEPS to the effect that mind-stuff at subconscious levels is the basis of all forms of embodiment.

In Lesson 30, no mention was made of the direction assigned to the letter Nun and to Key 13 because we wished to bring this into close correspondence with Key 14.

The direction corresponding to Nun is South-West, the vertical line at the south side of the western face of the Cube of Space. (See Fig. 1 of the diagram accompanying Lesson 18.) This line is opposite to the line South-East, corresponding to Taurus, just as the sign Scorpio is opposite to Taurus in the zodiac.

As the southern boundary of the western face of the cube, it corresponds to the ascending side of the Wheel of Fortune and to the rising figure of Hermanubis. One of the fundamental meanings of Key 10 has to do with the ascending scale of organic evolution or bodily development, which is an expression of the reproductive forces under the rulership of Scorpio.

Through the operation of these forces, first of all in the laws of chemical affinity and later in the sexual activities of plants and animals, the Life-power provides itself with finer and finer vehicles of expression. At last the human organism appears and goes through stage after stage of refinement, from race to race. The continuation of this process is due to the exercise of the reproductive function. Few human personalities have any awareness of what is really at work behind the compelling urges of the **libido**.

Finally, there appear on earth men and women, a few in every generation, who are sufficiently receptive to the Life-power's higher levels of awareness to begin to register in their brains some measure of knowledge of what is really the true significance of this universal mating urge.

The earlier forms of this knowledge seem to have been imperfect. They were expressed in a phallic symbolism which seems crude and offensive to modern taste. Yet the truths discovered are not the less valuable because all their consequences were not perceived at first. What has been learned since does not cancel nor contradict the awareness expressed by the phallic symbolism of ancient wise men. It is just as true as it ever was that man's progress to the goal of illumination is conditioned by his understanding of the significance of sex.

By directing the drive of the libido we may go beyond the position of Hermanubis in Key 10 and rise to the point of conscious union with the Higher Self. Thus the cube symbolism

shows the ascending line of South-West terminating at the end of the line West-Above, assigned to the letter Samekh and to Key 14.

This line West-Above begins at the upper end of the line North-West, assigned to Lamed and to Key 11. The current of energy in it moves from north to south. But the current of energy in the line North-West moves from above to below. Consequently, though the line West-Above joins the upper end of the line North-West to the upper end of the line South-West, **it receives no influence from the line North-West**. On the other hand, the current of energy in the line North Above, corresponding to Teth and Key 8, moves from east to west. At the northwest upper corner, where the lines of Teth, Lamed and Samekh meet, the current flowing in the line North-Above is divided. Part of it flows down through the line North-West. Part flows southward, through the line West-Above. (Note that the letters Teth, Lamed and Samekh, by their serpentine forms, represent three aspects of the Serpent Fire.)

Since the current of energy in the line South-West moves **upward**, it contributes nothing to the current in the line West-Above. The latter receives energy from the line corresponding to Teth, but none from the line of the letter Nun. Note also that in the symbolism of Key 14, the lion of Leo (Teth) is on one side of the angel and the eagle of Scorpio (Nun) is on the other side. The angel, principal symbol of Key 14, is between the lion and the eagle whose relative positions are like those of the corresponding lines of the cube.

Only the head of the lion and his forepaws are shown. His body rests horizontally, with his hindquarters nearer the east than his head. The eagle's whole body appears in the picture and stands in a vertical position. Thus the positions of the bodies of the lion and the eagle correspond to the positions of the lines to which these animals are assigned. By such careful attention to detail does Tarot indicate that it was invented by men who were great adepts, familiar with all the correlations of the mystery language of Ageless Wisdom.

Another point that should be considered in connection with the line West Above is that it is the western boundary of the upper face of the cube. Thus it represents an activity carried on at the level of man's self-conscious awareness (Above), and this activity is the goal or objective completing the work which is symbolized in Tarot by the Magician.

The "Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel" is what the Magician aims to accomplish. The end toward which all activities of human self-consciousness are directed is experimental verification of the truth that the personal life of every human being is actually under the guidance and direction of what Tarot pictures by the angel in Key 14.

Understand, this verification does not at all bring about such guidance and direction. The most ignorant man, utterly deluded by the illusion of personal separateness and independence, is just as certainly under such guidance as the most illuminated sage. Every human being is led and guided by the Holy Guardian Angel. Yet only a few are aware of this. To the mass of

humanity, the Holy Guardian Angel presents himself under the forbidding and dreadful aspect of the central figure in Key 15, which we shall begin to study in the next lesson.

ACT WITH ASSURANCE

By its symbolism, Key 14 tells you plainly that intellectual knowledge about the real YOU and its natural ability for union with the Source of all, is of no avail unless day by day in the affairs which claim your attention, you put the truths of existence into reverent and thankful operation.

You have to **do** something about the business of building the inner shrine in your body. You can't read about the wonderful potentialities of the Life-power, sit and meditate about them and fold your hands and exclaim, "Oh me! Oh my!"

Key 14 illustrates the occult meaning of the Path of Wisdom named "Intelligence of Probation or Trial". It will evoke from your inner consciousness, if you use it aright, an urge to do something about what you know. It will help you to act as if what you have learned about the powers of the **Self** were actually true (as it really is), and will help you demonstrate your possession of those powers. It will enable you to work on the centers of force in your physical body, will aid you to refine your senses and emotions, will help you give subconsciousness correct patterns by clear, discriminative thinking.

It will help you get in conscious touch with the Holy Guardian Angel. It will show you how to work from your God-center. As a help to your understanding of this read what the Bible says in Exodus 3. There you will find that the first essential is reverence. The second, equal in importance to the first, is thankfulness—not mere lip-service, but an habitual attitude of mind. The clue to the whole chapter is the name of God, I AM. When you hold a mental image in your mind's eye, know confidently that the I AM—all the power that ever was or will be—is HERE, NOW, working for you and with you to flood your pattern with divine substance and to congeal it into the form you desire.

Moses was admonished to go to Pharaoh and demonstrate the power of the I AM. He was promised the liberation of the Children of Israel. It wasn't enough, you see, that Moses should understand the instruction. He had to apply the principle in order to secure results. You will remember that Pharaoh did not at once permit the Children of Israel to leave Egypt. He was the very incarnation of obstinacy. Yet Moses persisted in pouring the power of the I AM into his mental image of a liberated Israel. He had to apply the law of demonstration repeatedly before he gained what he desired. He persevered in doing something about it—seeking to carry on in accordance with the I AM formula his lips pronounced.

This brings us to a consideration of your demonstrations. It gives us a serious side-light on all the work of B. O. T. A. It is not enough that you read the instruction. You have to act upon

it. You have to build the truth set forth into your mind, into your body, into your habits of activity. Then, by changing first your mind and then your body, you will find yourself able, in consequence, to change conditions in your surroundings.

We who are charged with the responsibility for spreading B. O. T. A. truths to the end that man may rule as God here on earth, have for a long time realized the need for daily application of the principles which lead one from the state of the natural man to that of the spiritual being who transcends material difficulties because he finds perfect identification with the Father.

As an aid to your future work, we recommend that you set up in your home a little shrine or adytum. It may be only a special corner in your room; but let it be consecrated ground. In this nook let only fine thoughts dwell. Enter it as one who enters into a holy place, with reverence. Then the vibrations will be of a high order and eventually your shrine will become a center of radiant power.

From this center you can send out blessings to the world. From this center you can send out healing influences. In this center will focus subtle forces which will aid you in manifesting the things you desire. Here, better than anywhere else, you will be able to make your conscious contact with your Holy Guardian Angel.

In this shrine, set up a little altar. It may be only a table, but on it you can arrange an easel to hold your Tarot Keys while you meditate on them. It will be an altar to the Life-power and there are deep occult reasons why it will become in a very real sense a point of special focus for actual powers.

If you can, it would be a fine thing to hang above the altar some picture that is an expression of your idea of what is finest and best. It may be a picture of Jesus, or of some Master of the Wisdom, or of some great soul like Lincoln or Emerson. It need not be a "holy picture" in any conventional sense. If a conventional religious picture strikes a chord in you, use that. But some people are more easily uplifted by a beautiful scene in a landscape painting. You need not imitate any particular church in the decoration of your little adytum. Make your selection on the basis of your own personal preferences.

Show your reverence to the Life-power by daily offerings of flowers on the altar, underneath the picture. If this be impracticable, put some prized possession there. Let that be the place where something you really value is always kept, as a reminder that all good gifts come from the **One Self**.

These are merely suggestions. However plain and simple or however ornate you make your personal adytum, remember that its main purpose is to establish a definite physical location which shall act as a focal point for the powers you are learning to use.

To some persons whose temperament is not naturally given to any form of ritual, this may not seem important. You may think you can always find the Central Self by simply going within, no matter where you may be. This is, of course, perfectly true. Yet the experience of millenniums is behind this idea of a place set apart for spiritual work and meditation. Real forces collect in such a place. They make it easier, as time goes on, for you to enter quickly into the right mood for your B. O. T. A. practice. So we earnestly advise you to consider this suggestion and carry it out to the best of your ability. You will then be in a position to experimentally verify the value of this practice.